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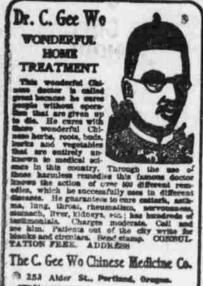
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The Gentleman From Indiana

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

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CHAPTER I.

HEN the rusty hands of the office clock marked half past 4, the editor in chief of the Carlow County Herald took his hand out of his hair, wiped his pen on his last notice from the White Caps, put on his coat, swept out the close little entry and left the sanctum for

the bright June afternoon.

He chose the way to the west, strolling thoughtfully out of town by the white, hot, deserted Main street and thence onward by the country road into which its proud half mile of old brick store buildings, tumbledown frame shops and thinly painted cottages degenerated. The sun was in his face where the road ran between the summer fields, lying waveless, low, graclous in promise; but, coming to a wood of hickory and beech and walnut that stood beyond, he might turn his down-bent hat brim up and hold the corners of the snake fence, although the sun beat upon the road so the marrow of his bones. close beside. There was no movement flirt of crimson where two robins hopped noiselessly. The late afternoon, when the air is quite still, had come, yet there rested somewhere on the quiet day a faint, pleasant, woody smell. It came to the editor of the Herald as he climbed to the top rail of the fence for a seat, and he drew a long breath to get the elusive odor more luxuriously, and then it was gone

"A habit of delicacies," he said aloud, addressing the wide silence complainingly. "One taste and they quit," he finished, gazing solemnly upon the shining little town down the road.

altogether.

It was a place of which its inhabitants sometimes remarked easily that their city had a population of from 5,000 to 6,000 souls, but it should be easy to forgive them for such statements. Civic pride is a virtue. The town lay in the heart of that fertile stretch of flat lands in Indiana where signs of man in this sad expanse perceives a reckless amount of rail fence, at intervals a large barn, and here and there man himself, incurious, patient, slow, looking up from the fields apathetically as the limited files by. Now and then the train passes a village built scatteringly about a courthouse, with a mill or two humming near the tracks. This is a county seat, and the inhabitants and the local papers refer to it confidently as "our city."

Such a county seat was Plattville, capital of Carlow county. The social and business energy of the town consummer time the gentlemen were wont to lounge from store to store in their the square stood the old red brick courthouse, loosely fenced in a shady grove of maple and eim-"slipp'ry ellum"-called the "courthouse yard." When the sun grew too hot for the dry goods box whittlers in front of the stores around the square and the occupants of the chairs in front of the Palace hotel on the corner they would go across and drape themselves over the fence and carve their initials on the top board. From the position of the sun the editor of the Herald judged that these operations were now in progress, and he was not deeply elated by the knowledge that whatever desultory conversation might pass from man to man on the fence would probably be inspired by his own convictions ex-

pressed editorially in the Herald, He drew a faded tobacco bag and a brier pipe from his pocket and, after filling and lighting the pipe, twirled the pouch mechanically about his finger, then, suddenly regarding it, patted it corpssingly. It had been a giddy little bag long ago, gay with embroidery in the colors of the editor's university, and, although now it was frayed to the verge of tatters, it still bore an air of pristine jauntiness, an air of which its owner in nowise partook. He looked from it toward the village in the clear distance and sighed softly as he put the pouch back in his pocket and, resting his arm on his knee and his chin on his hand, sat blowing clouds of smoke out of the shade into the sunshine, absently watching the ghostly shadow on

the white dust of the road. A little gurter snake crept under the fence beneath him and disappeared in the undoubted dictator of the district. the underbrush; a rabbit, progressing on its travels by a series of brilliant dashes and terror smitten halts, came within a few yards of him, sat up with quivering nose and eyes alight with try and (to his own surprise) proved to fearful imaginings and vanished a flash be an adaptable young man who en of fluffy brown and white. Shadows

answers; there was a woodland stir of breezes, and the pair of robins left the branches overhead in eager flight, vacating before the arrival of a flock of blackbirds hastening thither ere the eventide should be upon them. The blackbirds came, chattered, gossiped, quarreled and beat each other with their wings above the smoker sitting on the top fence rail.

But he had remembered. A thousand miles to the east it was commencement day, seven years to a day from his own commencement.

Five years ago, on another June afternoon, a young man from the east had alighted on the platform of the station north of Plattville and, entering the rickety omnibus that lingered there seeking whom it might rattle to deafness, demanded to be driven to the Herald building. It did not strike the driver that the newcomer was precisely a gay young man when he climbhis head erect. Here the shade fell ed into the omnibus, but an hour later, deep and cool on the green tangle of as he stood in the doorway of the edirag and iron weed and long grass in fice he had indicated as his destination, depression seemed to have settled into

Plattville was instantly alert to the of the crisp young leaves overhead, stranger's presence, and interesting con-High in the boughs there was a quick | jectures were hazarded all day long at the back door of Martin's Dry Goods Emporium (this was the club during the day), and at supper the new arrival and his probable purposes were discussed over every table in the town. Upon inquiry he had informed Judd Bennett, the driver of the omnibus, that he had come to stay. Naturally such a declaration caused a sensation, as people did not come to Plattville to live except through the inadvertency of being born there. In addition the young man's appearance and attire were reported to be extraordinary. Many of the curious, among them most of the marriageable females of the place, took occasion to pass and repass the sign of the Carlow County Herald during the

evening. Meanwhile the stranger was seated in the dingy office upstairs with his head bowed low on his arms. Twilight stole through the dirty window panes and faded into darkness. Night filled eastern travelers, glancing from car the room. He did not move. The young windows, shudder and return their eyes man from the east had bought the Herto interior upholstery, preferring even, ald from an agent-had bought it withthe swaying caparisons of a Pullman to out ever having been within a hundred the monotony without. The landscape miles of Plattville. The Herald was runs on interminably level lines-bleak an alleged weekly which had some in winter, a desolate plain of mud and times appeared within five days of its snow; hot and dusty in summer, miles declared date of publication and someon miles of flat lonesomeness, with not times missed fire altogether. It was a one cool hill slope away from the sun. thorn in the side of every patriot of The persistent tourist who seeks for Carlow county, and Carlow people, after supporting the paper loyally and long, had at last given it up and subscribed for the Gazette, published in the neighboring county of Amo. The former proprietor of the Herald, a surreptitious gentleman with a goatee, had taken the precaution of leaving Plattville forever on the afternoon preceding his successor's arrival. The young man from the east had vastly overpaid for his purchase. Moreover, the price be had paid for it was all the money he had in the world.

The next morning he went bitterly to work. He hired a compositor from centrated on the square, and here in Rouen, a young man named Parker, who set type all night long and helped shirt sleeves, and in the center of The citizens shook their heads pessimistically. They had about given up the idea that the Herald could ever amount to anything, and they betrayed external evidences of it may disapan innocent but caustic doubt of ability in any stranger.

One day the new editor left a note on his door: "Will return in fifteen minutes.

Mr. Rodney McCune, a politician from the neighboring county of Gaines, hapto his henchmen, found the note and wrote beneath the message the scathing inquiry, "Why?"

When he discovered this addendum, the editor smiled for the first time since his advent and reported the incident in his next issue, using the rubric "Why a text for a rousing editorial on honesty in politics, a subject of which he already knew something. The political district to which Carlow belonged was governed by a limited number of gentlemen whose wealth was ever on the increase, and honesty in politics was a startling conception to the minds of the passive and resigned voters, who talked the editorial over on the street corners and in the stores. The next week there was another editorial, personal and local in its application, and thereby it became evident that the new proprietor of the Herald was a theorist who believed in general that a politician's bonor should not be merely of that middling healthy species known as "bonor among politicians," and in particular that Rodney McCune should not receive the nomination of his party for congress, Now, Mr. McCune was and his followers laughed at the stranger's fantastic onset; but the editor was not content with the word of print. He hired a horse and rode about the counjoyed exercise with a pitchfork to the grew longer; a cricket chirped and heard | farmer's profit while the farmer talk-

ed. He talked bress bimself, but after tract between Mr. McCune and myself. of the paper received an addition. One istening an hour or so he would drop a word from the saddle as he left, and then, by some surprising wigardey, the farmer, thinking over the interview, decided there was some sense in what

that young fellow said and grew curlous to see what the young fellow had further to say in the Herald.

Politics is the one subject that goes to the vitals of every rural American, and a Hoosier will talk politics after be is dead.

Everybody read the campaign editorials and found them interesting, although there was no one who did not perceive the utter absurdity of a young stranger dropping into Carlow and involving himself in a party fight against the boss of the district. It was entirely a party fight, for by grace of the last gerrymander the nomination carried with it the certainty of elec-

A week before the convention there came a provincial earthquake. The news passed from man to man in awe struck whispers-McCune had withdrawn his name, making the shallowest of excuses to his cohorts. Nothing was known of the real reason for his disordered retreat beyond the fact that he had been in Plattville on the morn ing before his withdrawal and had be sued from a visit to the Herald office in a state of palsy. Mr. Parker, the Rouen printer, had been present at the close of the interview, but he held his ence at the command of his employer. He had been called into the sanctum and had found McCune, white and shaking, leaning on the desk.

"Parker," said the editor, exhibiting a bundle of papers he held in his hand, "I want you to witness a verbal con-



Mr. Rodney McCune found the nate

These papers are an affidavit and copies of some records of a street car company which obtained a charter while Mr. McCune was in the legislature. They were sent to me by a man seems to have lost. On consideration McCune agrees to retire from politics for good. You understand, if he ever lifts his head again politically we publish them, and the courts will do the rest. Now, in case anything should

happen to me"-Something will happen to you all right!" broke out McCune. "You can bank on that, you black"-

"Come," the editor interrupted not unpleasantly. "Why should there be anything personal in all this? I don't confirmed by the old man's appearance. not at all-and I think you are getting off rather easily, aren't you? You keep out of politics and everything will be comfortable. You ought never to have been in it, you see. It's a mistake not to go square, because in the long run somebody is sure to give you away. like the fellow who sent me these. You promise to hold to a strictly private life?"

"You're a traitor to the party," groan-

ed the other; "but you only wait"-The editor smiled sadly. "Wait noth ing! Don't threaten, man. Go home to your wife. I'll give you three to one she'll be giad you are out of it."

"I'll give you three to one," said Me Cune, "that the White Caps will get you if you stay in Carlow. You want to look out for yourself, I tell you, my smart boy."

"Good day, Mr. McCune," was the answer. "Let me have your note of withdrawal before you leave town this afternoon." The young man paused a moment, then extended his hand as he said: "Shake hands, won't you? I-I haven't meant to be too hard on you. I hope things will seem easier and gayer to you before long, and if if any thing should turn up that I can do for you in a private way I'll be very glad, you know. Goodby.

The sound of the Herald's victory went over the state. The paper came out regularly. The townsfork bought It, and the farmers drove in for it. Old subscribers came back. Old advertisers renewed. The Herald began to sell in Amo, and Gaines county people subscribed. Carlow folk held up their heads when journalism was mentioned. Presently the Herald announced a news connection with Rouen, and with that and the aid of "patent insides" began an era of three issues a week, appearing on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The Plattville brass band serv naded the editor.

During the second month of the new regime of the Herald the working force

night the editor found some barroom loafers tormenting a patriarchal old man who had a magnificent head and a grand white beard. He had been thrown out of a saloon, and he was I do not know, an anonymous friend of drunk with the drunkenness of three Mr. McCune-in fact, a friend he weeks' steady pouring. He propped himself against a wall and reproved of our not printing these papers Mr. his termenters in Latin. "I'm walking your way, Mr. Fishee," remarked the journalist hooking his arm into the old man's, "Suppose we leave our friends bere and go home."

Mr. Fishee was the one inhabitant of the town possessing an unknown past.

and a glamour of romance was thrown about him by the gossips, who agreed that there was a dark, portentous secret in his life, an opinion not too well recognize you as my private enemy- His fine eyes had a habit of wandering to the horizon, and his expression was mild, vague and sad, lost to dreams, At the first glatter one guessed that his dreams would never be practicable in their application, and some such impression of him was probably what caused the editor of the Herald to nickname him, in his own mind, "the White

> Mr. Fishee, coming to Plattville from nobody knew where, had taught in the high school for ten years, but he proved quite unable to refrain from lecturing to the dumfounded pupils on archie ology, neglecting more and more the ordinary courses of instruction, growing year by year more forgetful and absent, lost in his few books and his own reflections, until at last he had been discharged for incompetency. The dazed old man had no money and no way to make any. One day he dropped in at the hotel bur, where Wilkerson, the professional drunkard, favored him with his society. The old man understood. He knew it was the beginning of the end. He sold his books in order to continue his credit at the Palace bar, and once or twice, unable to proceed to his own dwelling, spent the night in a lumber yard, piloted thither by the hardler veteran Wilkerson.

The morning after the editor took him home Fishee appeared at the Herald office in a new hat and a decent suit of black. He had received his salary in advance, his books had been repurchased and he had become the reportorial staff of the Carlow County Herald; also he was to write various treatises for the paper. For the first few evenings when he started home from the office his chief walked with him, chatting cheerfully, until they had passed the Palace bar. But Fisbee's redemption was complete.

(Continued Next Sunday.)

sss KILL THE

The worst disease the world has ever known, and the greatest scourge to the human race, is Contagious Blood Poison. One drop of the virus of this loathsome disease will pollute and vitiate the purest and healthiest blood, and within a short time after the first little sore appears the system is filled with the awful poison; the skin breaks out in a red rash, the glands of the groins begin to swell, the throat and mouth become ulcerated, the hair and eyebrows drop out, and often the entire surface of the body is covered with copper-colored splotches, pustular eruptions and sickening-looking sores and abscesses. Many a

man has been cut down in the prime of life, or his health so impaired by this vile disease that usefulness is destroyed, and he becomes a burden to himself and an object of pity to him pursue advertisements all day, the rest of mankind. Contagious Blood Poison is the most annoying, humiliating and degrading of all diseases. It is as treacherous and elusive as the serpent. Under the mercury and potash treatment all

pear, and the victim misled, be buoyed up by false hopes of a cure. while the disease may even then have fastened its fangs in some vital spot within the system, where pening to be in Plattville on an errand it is doing its destructive work unseen. Mercury has arrayed against it thousands upon thousands of physical wrecks and chronic invaand their systems saturated with no matter how severe the case may be. Has the Herald Returned to Life?" as these powerful drugs, only to be Greensburg, Pa., June 16, 1902. harassed by constantly returning



I am compelled by a sense of gratitude to tell you of the great good your remedy has done me. Among other symptoms I was severely afflicted with Rheumatism, and got almost past going. The disease got a firm hold upon my system; my blood was thoroughly poisoned with the virus, as characterized by the usual symptoms. I lost in weight, was run down, had sore throat, eruptions, splotches and other evidences of the disease. I was truly in bad shape when I began S. S., but the persistent use of it brought me out of my trouble, safe and sound, and I have the courage to publicly testify to the virtues of your great blood remedy, S. S., and to recommend it to all Blood Poison

lids who have been dosed for years sufferers, sincerely believing that if it is taken according to directions and given a fair trial, it will thoroughly eliminate every particle of virus,

JAMES CURRAN.

symptoms and confronted with unmistakable traces of blood poison years after. As long as your blood is tainted with this awful virus you are a source of infection and danger to all who come in contact with you, and your children will carry in their veins the same dreadful contagion. As long as there is life in the serpent there is danger in its fangs, and so long as any signs of Contagious Blood Poison remain there is danger of infection. Safety lies in crushing out the life of this loathsome disease and killing the serpent, and no remedy known does this so thoroughly and permanently as S. S. S. It is an antidote for this peculiar virus that spreads through the system, defiles the blood and contaminates all healthy tissues and threatens every organ and part of the body.

S. S. S. contains no mineral of any description, but is guaranteed entirely vegetable, and we offer \$1,000 for proof that it is not just as we represent it to be. It leaves no bad after-effects, but purifies the blood and at the same time builds up your general health. In chronic or long-standing cases of blood poison, where the stomach and digestion have been damaged by the use of minerals, S. S. S. will prove

an excellent tonic and appetizer and helpful in restoring strength and activity to all parts of the system. Kill the serpent, crush out its life, or you are apt to feel the bad effects of the disease all your life. If you will write us fully about your case, our physicians will gladly advise without charge, and mail you a copy of our home-treatment book telling all about Contagious Blood Poison, its different stages and symptoms, and a lot of interesting information about this formidable and much-dreaded disease.

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